



Seattle  
Design  
Commission

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

21 October 2004

Gregory J. Nickels,  
*Mayor*

David Spiker  
*Chair*

Charles Anderson

Pam Beyette

Karen Kiest

Hannah McIntosh

Anindita Mitra

Sheri Olson

Nic Rossouw

Donald Royse

Darrell Vange

Guillermo Romano,  
*Executive Director*

Layne Cubell,  
*Commission Coordinator*

Please review these minutes for accuracy and return any comments or corrections by  
**Wednesday, 17 November 2004**  
to Carrie Duncan via phone at 615-1107; fax at 288-7883; or email at  
[carrie.duncan@seattle.gov](mailto:carrie.duncan@seattle.gov)

Projects Reviewed

Center City Access Strategy  
Planning Division Update

Convened: 9:30am

Adjourned: 1:45pm

Commissioners Present

David Spiker, Chair  
Pam Beyette  
Karen Kiest  
Hannah McIntosh  
Anindita Mitra  
Sheri Olson  
Nic Rossouw  
Donald Royse  
Darrell Vange

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano  
Tom Iurino  
Carrie Duncan



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Development

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**21 Oct 2004** Project: **Center City Access Strategy**

Phase: Briefing

Previous Reviews: 19 September 2003

Presenters: Jemae Hoffman, SDOT  
Ann Sutphin, SDOT

Time: 1.5 hours

(SDC Ref. #220 | DC00312)

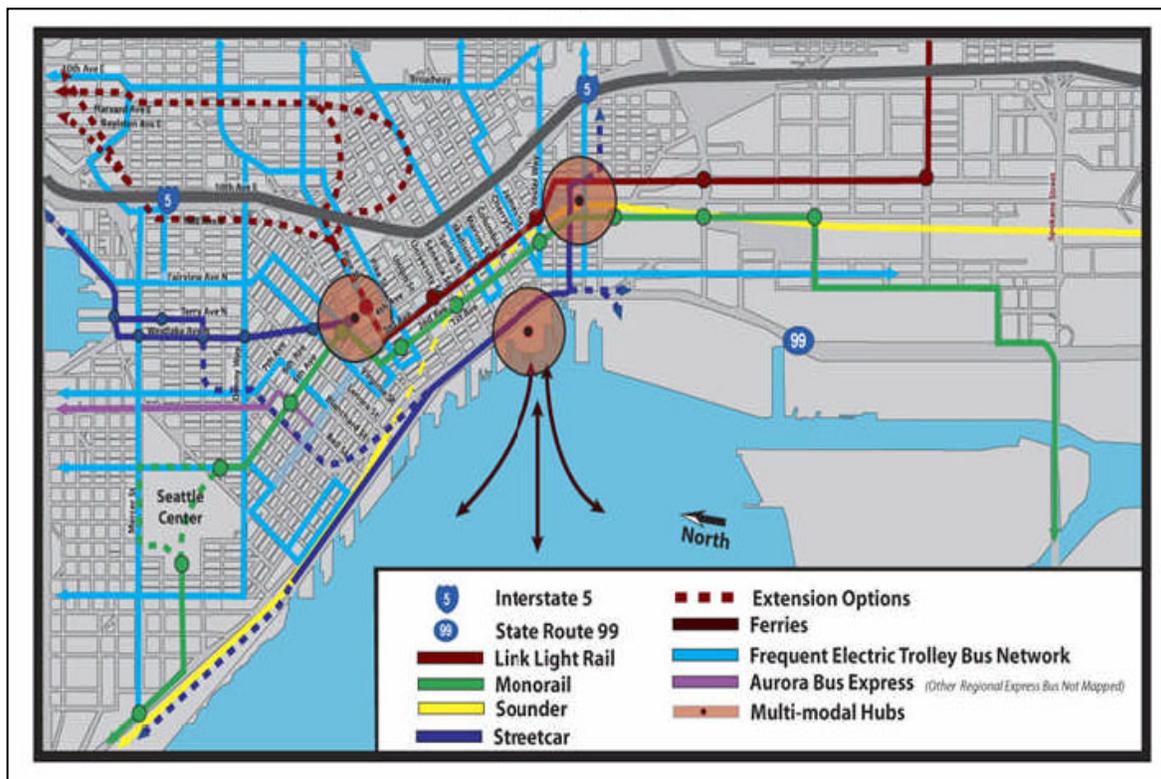
**Action:** **The Commission thanks the proponents for the holistic approach to the Center City Access Strategy, and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **Encourages exploration of the east/west connections to the waterfront;**
- **Encourages proponents to continue to examine the Center City transportation networks as an opportunity for regional access as well as local access;**
- **Applauds focus to bring clarity and understanding to the City's transportation network, and encourages future work on multi-modal hubs;**
- **Appreciates the focus on mobility over driving;**
- **Encourages work with other agencies when developing further drafts of the Strategy;**
- **Suggests that proponents begin looking at the above-grade changes that will be made during the Sound Transit tunnel closure project;**
- **Encourages a closer look at transit connections;**
- **Encourages SDOT to prioritize their goals for achieving the vision of a comprehensive strategy;**
- **Encourages proponents to look at the possibility of improving Denny Way;**
- **Recommends approval of this initial planning phase.**

SDOT's philosophy is to make the best use of Downtown streets—envisioning a future of moving more people on transportation modes such as bus, light rail, monorail, ferries, streetcars, and bicycle and pedestrian pathways to create less reliance on the automobile. Maximizing transit and freight options into and around Seattle's Downtown to accommodate projected growth is crucial to the region's economy. The project team is developing strategies that take full advantage of City streets, prepare the City and region for the construction of major projects, and offer to help in case of an emergency.

Proponents have developed a conceptual framework for maximizing access within the Center City by improving and integrating public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian networks. This information is included in the City Center Circulation Report, which is the stepping stone for development of the City Center Access Strategy.





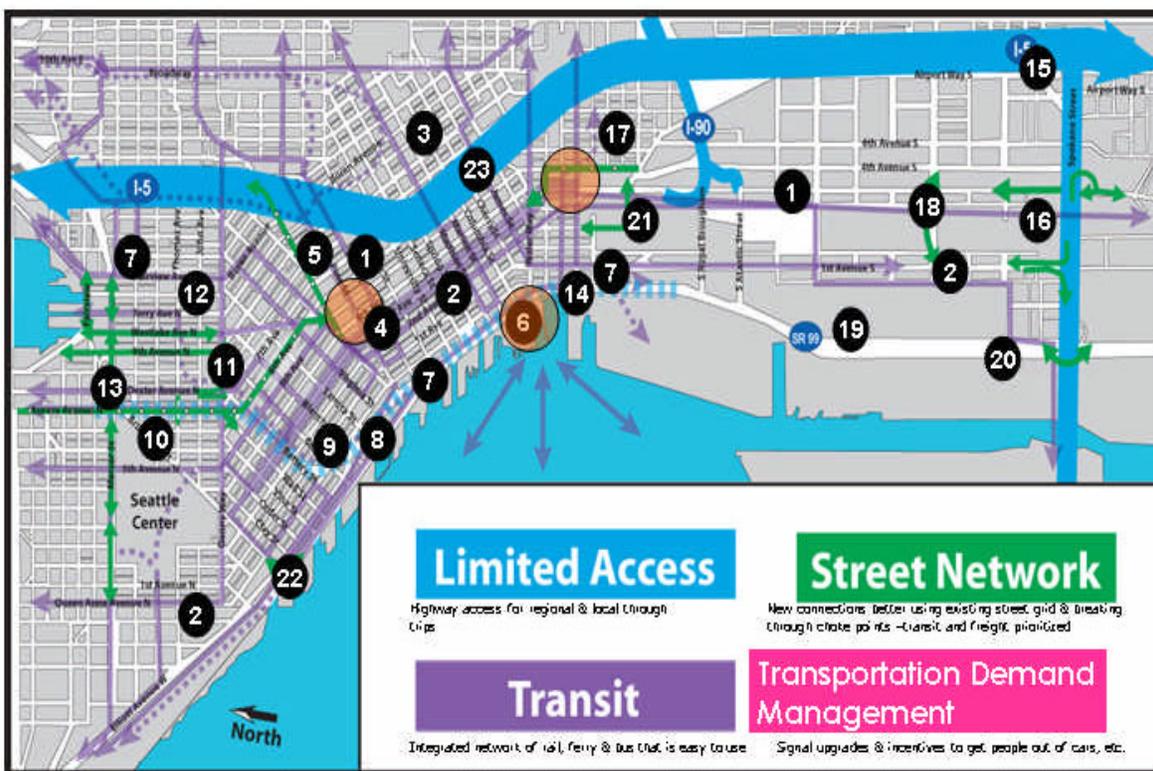
Future Center City Transportation Network Map

#### Recommended Projects for Consideration:

- **Low-cost demand management strategies:** Include signal upgrades to allow for transit priority, using variable message signs to inform freight trucks of incidents and options for avoiding them, and transportation demand management tools such as incentive for people to try other options than driving alone.
- **Link Light Rail:** Central link is currently under construction, and an examination of options to continue north are underway.
- **Sounder and regional express busses:** All bring many commuters into Downtown.
- **Monorail, streetcar, and bus:** Will provide even more connections to many Seattle neighborhoods in and around downtown.
- **Options for creating a streetcar network:** Includes options for how the waterfront streetcar can be rebuilt and extended through an Alaskan Way Viaduct rebuild. Make this a more viable transit option rather than just a tourist attraction by designing for extensions and the ability for more frequent service.
- **Multi-modal hubs:** Three multi-modal hubs become important links to regional access. These are unique opportunities to create places where people can seamlessly link to other transportation systems. Need to ensure those links work well.
- **Bike and pedestrian needs:** Include the addition of bike lanes to ensure the safety and comfort of users walking and biking in the Center City.
- **Key pedestrian linkages:** Facilitates walking between densely traveled areas, and improves

pedestrian connections.

- **The bus network:** Will work with Metro Transit to make this system simple to use—simplify the system within Downtown and to provide easy-to-understand connections to rail, etc.
- **Third Avenue:** Will operate as the main thoroughfare for catching the bus or train in the bus tunnel, or a bus on the surface street.
- **Ferries:** The service currently carries over 9 million riders through Colman Dock each year. New operations would provide fast passenger ferry service and provide transit connections for ferry riders.



The Center City Strategy- Map of Projects & the Four Key Components Considered

- **Creating a Two-Way Mercer Boulevard:** Will include better street connections and pedestrian and bicycle amenities.
- **An additional ramp from the Spokane Viaduct to 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue South:** Would provide more connections for transit and freight to the street network.
- **New connections:** Connections between Airport Way, King Street, and others will better utilize the street network.
- **I-5 and SR-99:** Act as important points for highway access.

As a form of next steps, proponents will soon be presenting the Center City Access Strategy project concepts for feedback on how to improve them. Once projects are agreed upon, proponents will examine design issues, and will seek funding for final design and implementation.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- States that the Strategy does not outline east and west connections to the waterfront, and asks if there is any interest to connect the waterfront streetcar to the South Lake Union Streetcar.
  - Proponents stated that one possible extension will connect the two systems, but will need to examine grade issues in that area.
- Asks if proponents have assumed a certain Viaduct replacement or new Mercer Corridor concept.
  - Proponents stated that the Viaduct options are discussed in recently-completed Viaduct reports, and that a two-way Mercer Corridor option is discussed in the recommended projects.
- Encourages proponents to aim for clarity of all Downtown routes. States that pedestrians should overrule transit connections.
  - Proponents stated that they want a transit network that commits to performance standards for urban villages.
- Appreciates the focus on mass transit. Asks if proponents have considered the Vancouver model, making it more difficult to drive downtown.
- Asks if the Strategy addresses regional connections, and asks about the projections for freight traffic.
  - Proponents stated that east side connections will work on addressing high-capacity transit, improving HOV transit, and extending light rail connections. States that there needs to be new sources of funding to meet future transit demand. Further states that the Freight Mobility Advisory Committee is working on addressing trips from Interbay to the Duwamish as part of the Alaskan Way Viaduct/Seawall Project.
- Asks about the projected 27,000 new drive-alone commuters.
  - Proponents stated that those projections in the presentation are taken from the Downtown Height and Density projections and are based on a continuation of the existing mode split. The City's goal is to make a change to the mode split and increase transit ridership. The number was used in the presentation as a way to illustrate that the cost of doing nothing with regards to Center City access is high.
- States that multi-modal hubs currently emphasize transit as bus travel, but does not attempt to make sense of the system. Encourages proponents to incorporate an elevated sense of clarity for how the system works as a whole.
  - Proponents stated that that is something they would like to work on as well. Stated examples of color-coding busses and rail lines.
- Asks if proponents know about future plans for the Sounder line and if there will be another station north of downtown.
- States that Madison/Marion is a good east/west connection point for transit. Asks what proponents plan to do about the shift in street grids at Denny.
  - Proponents stated that they are working on better connections across and along Denny. Denny has a difficult configuration because it is where two different street grid patterns collide.
- Encourages proponents to prioritize.

- Proponents stated that they are updating both the Comprehensive and the Strategic Plans.

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**21 Oct 2004** Project: **Planning Division Update**

Phase: Update

Previous Review: 16 September 2004; 19 August 2004; 15 July 2004; 3 June 2004; 15 April 2004;  
15 January 2004; 18 December 2003; 20 November 2003

Presenter: John Rahaim, Planning Director, DPD

Time: 45 minutes

(SDC Ref. #220 | DC00322)

**Summary: The Commission thanks John Rahaim for the update.**

- **Appreciates the intriguing update on the Waterfront Planning Committee meetings, Colman Dock Expansion, the Center City Strategy, and the Commercial Code;**
- **Is interested in future updates about the work on the Commercial Code;**
  - **Encourages parking restrictions and first-floor regulation changes as a way to provide a balance between housing and office in commercial areas;**
  - **Strategies that the City adopts to promote work force housing in downtown;**
  - **Looks forward to future updates on the status of planning for industrial areas and the City's position on industrial zones;**
- **Looks forward to future updates on City Planning at DPD.**

Waterfront Planning Committee Meetings:

The Waterfront Planning Committee is meeting regularly with the Advisory Team. There is growing public interest. Attendees include those who do not have a stake in the waterfront, and people who were not directly involved in the charette. The City is hoping to have a concept design by 2005.

Coleman Dock Expansion/Washington State Ferries:

Preliminary plans include the purchase of Pier 48, taking water coverage, and expanding Coleman Dock. Expansion will cost approximately \$160 million. At Pier 48, the water is shallow, and will allow for habitat protection and improvement. Design concepts will include options that do and do not include Pier 48.

Center City Strategy:

The Strategy is meant to be an umbrella under which the downtown area operates. Key elements of the Strategy include increasing attractiveness of housing, increasing population, improving transportation, and taking the opportunity to insert green space into the downtown area through open space, public space, and street design.

Commercial Code:

The Commercial Code outlines efforts to rethink zoning for all commercial areas in the City to make regulations more flexible. Efforts may include regulations that reduce parking requirements around the City, and eliminate parking in urban centers and station areas. New regulations may also permit flexibility in downtown housing, allowing housing on ground floors.

Next year DPD will be examining the City's industrial areas. There are questions about the viability of industrial areas and land availability. For example, Interbay is zoned as an industrial area. The larger issues include whether future plans will incorporate housing in design, as well as incorporate freight mobility. DPD recognizes that the Port is a public entity, and would like to push the viability of Interbay as far as possible.

October 21 Commission Business

**ACTION ITEMS**

A. TIMESHEETS

B. MINUTES FROM 07 OCTOBER—TABLED UNTIL 04  
NOVEMBER

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

C. ETHICS COMMISSION DIRECTOR BRIEFING—ALL

D. PROJECT UPDATES—IURINO

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

E. WATERFRONT ADVISORY TEAM—10/27, 3-5 PM, RM. L280

F. MONORAIL REVIEW PANEL RETREAT—10/29, 8 AM-1 PM

G. COMMISSIONER FAREWELL/WELCOME RECEPTION—  
11/19, 5-8 PM